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Trennis Henderson

Ouachita News Bureau

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## **Ouachita to hold June 11 dedication service for Elrod Center's new home**

*By Trennis Henderson, OBU Vice President for Communications*

June 09, 2015

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at [newsbureau@obu.edu](mailto:newsbureau@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. -- Honoring the life, leadership and legacy of Dr. Ben M. Elrod, Ouachita Baptist University officials will dedicate the new home of the Ben M. Elrod Center for Family and Community on Thursday, June 11, at 10 a.m.

The dedication service will be held in the new facility on the corner of 6th and Cherry streets on the Ouachita campus. It will be preceded by a 9 a.m. open house.

The dedication ceremony will include a welcome by Jay Heflin, chairman of the Ouachita Board of Trustees, as well as remarks by Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement and director of the Elrod Center, and Ouachita President Rex Horne. Dr. Elrod and his wife, Betty Lou, will share words of response followed by a prayer of dedication by Judy Duvall, Elrod Center assistant director.

The Elrod Center was established in 1997 to fulfill the mission of "initiating, encouraging, coordinating and facilitating public service, volunteerism, service learning, servant leadership and community engagement." It was named in honor of Dr. Elrod who served from 1988 to 1998 as Ouachita's 13th president and has served as chancellor since his retirement.

"The new Elrod Center stands as a bold statement to the ongoing commitment of Ouachita to the value it places on service to others and to the community of which it is a part," Cosh said. "The dedication of the new Elrod Center will provide an opportunity for Ouachita to honor the ongoing support that Dr. and Mrs. Elrod have provided for the center since its establishment in 1997.

"The opening of the beautiful new Elrod Center on the corner of Cherry and 6th streets will enhance to attractiveness of the southern entrance to the campus and provide a custom-designed building to meet the ongoing needs of the outreach programs of the Center," he added.

The Elrod Center's former offices, located on North Sixth Street on the Ouachita campus, have relocated across the street to the new facilities. The two-story office complex features a large community room for campus and community events, two conference rooms and several staff offices as well as a reception area and kitchen facilities. The new facility is being funded by gifts from the Heflin Family Foundation, J.E. and L.E. Mabree Foundation, Keith Smith Company, Morris Foundation, Olds Foundation, Ray White Lumber Company and the Ross Foundation as well as generous gifts by Dr. and Mrs. Elrod and several other individual donors.

Paying tribute to Dr. Elrod and his family during the groundbreaking ceremony held last summer, President Horne said, "We all love the Elrods here at Ouachita. We're thankful for their leadership. We're

thankful for their commitment to family, their commitment to Christ, their commitment to the church and, of course, their undying devotion to Ouachita Baptist University.

"I'm thankful for the Elrods and for the Elrod Center," Dr. Horne added. "When a name matches with the mission, that's a win-win. The mission of the Elrod Center is related to faith and family and community and service.

One of the Elrod Center's signature ministry projects is the semi-annual Tiger Serve Day community service project. Since its start in 1997, Tiger Serve Day volunteers have donated more than 70,000 hours of service in the Arkadelphia area. Other Elrod Center initiatives include such efforts as America Reads and America Counts tutoring, ElderServe, Backyard Bible Clubs and Big Brother/Big Sister programs.

For more information about the Ben M. Elrod Center for Family and Community, visit [www.obu.edu/elrod](http://www.obu.edu/elrod).